

Production No. 1F13

The Simpsons

"DEEP SPACE HOMER"

Written by

David Mirkin

Created by

Matt Groening

Developed by

James L. Brooks

Matt Groening

Sam Simon

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Return to Script Department
20TH CENTURY FOX TELEVISION
10201 W. Pico Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90035

FINAL 1

Date 8/13/93

ANGLE ON

LENNY and CARL, who are wearing Worker of the Week medallions.

CARL

I hate these Worker of the Week award ceremonies.

LENNY

Who even cares anymore? Everyone that works here has already got one.

CARL

Except for...

Homer enters; he's the only one not wearing a medallion.

HOMER

Hello. Well, today's the day for Homer J. I know I'm gonna win this time.

LENNY

Yeah, how come?

Homer pats a book.

HOMER

(VERY COCKY) Union rule twenty-six -
(READING) "Every employee must win worker of the week at least once, whether he deserves it or not.

We see Smithers up on the balcony.

SMITHERS

Attention, everyone. Let's have an awed hush please for Mr. Burns.

Burns steps onto the balcony.

BURNS

Men, it is imperative that we push the
freedom fighters out of the lowlands
before the start of the rainy season...

Smithers whispers in Burns' ear.

BURNS (CONT'D)

Huh? What? (COVERING TO CROWD) And
by that I mean, of course, it's time
for the Worker of the Week Award. I
can't believe we've overlooked this
week's winner for so very very long. We
simply could not function without his
tireless efforts. So a round of
applause for... this inanimate carbon
rod.

Burns holds up a rod. Smithers drapes the award around it.

CROWD NOISE

(AD LIBBING) It's about time. / Way to
go, Rod! / We love you, Rod! / Long
overdue.

HOMER

(FURIOUS GROWLS) Inanimate huh? I'll
show him inanimate!

Homer clenches his fist in rage, but remains perfectly
still for a long beat. Everyone exits the yard around him
until he is all alone.

INT. SIMPSONS HOUSE - NIGHT

SCENE 2

The Simpsons eat dinner.

HOMER

Stupid carbon rod. It's all just a popularity contest.

BART

(EXCITED) Wow! Did you actually get to see the rod?

MARGE

I'm sorry, Homey.

HOMER

Nobody respects me at work.

MARGE

Well, we respect you.

We see Bart has just finished drawing, on the back of Homer's head, an arrow labelled "INSERT BRAIN HERE." Lisa sees it and GIGGLES.

MARGE

Bart, I told you, don't draw on your father's skull.

Marge sees what it says and can't help starting to LAUGH herself.

HOMER

What, what does it say? I want to see.

Homer turns his head to try to catch a glimpse. He goes faster and faster until he falls onto the floor and begins rolling around like a dog trying to catch its tail. The family stops LAUGHING and begins to look a little concerned.

CUT TO:

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

A dejected Homer sits on the couch.

HOMER

Ah, TV respects me. It laughs with me,
not at me.

ON TV

We see a man pointing out at Homer and LAUGHING derisively.

MAN

(LAUGHING) You stupid...

HOMER

(ANNOYED GRUNT)

He changes the channel.

ON TV

We see cool SHOTS of TANKS, HELICOPTERS, and ARMORED
VEHICLES racing along to INSPIRING MUSIC.

ARMY ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This is today's army.

HOMER

That's it! I'll join the army. I'll
be all that I can be.

We see the tanks, helicopters and armored vehicles arrive
at a huge parking lot. Tarps are thrown over the vehicles.
A SOLDIER dumps a sack marked "MOTH BALLS" into the top of
a tank and high-fives another soldier.

ARMY ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Today's army is rapidly downsizing.

There are no more jobs available.

Until the next war, you are all that
you can be.

Homer changes the channel on TV.

SCENE 3

HOMER

(MOANS, THEN) Peace is hell.

He **FLICKS** the remote. We see a NASA spacecraft sitting on a launch pad.

NASA ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

(A LA BROKAW) It's a lovely day for a launch here live at Cape Canaveral at the lower end of the Florida peninsula. And the purpose of this mission is truly, really electrifying.

NASA ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)

(LIFELESS) That's correct, Tom. The lionshare of this flight will be devoted to the study of the effects of weightlessness on tiny screws.

NASA ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

Unbelievable! And just imagine the logistics of weightlessness. And of course this could have literally millions of applications here on Earth... in everything from watch making to watch repair.

HOMER

Boring.

He tries to flip the channel but the batteries fall out of the remote control.

HOMER (CONT'D)

(PANICKED) No, the batteries!

NASA ANNOUNCER #1

Now let's look at the crew a little.

NASA ANNOUNCER #2

They're a colorful bunch; they've been
dubbed the "Three Musketeers."

NASA ANNOUNCER #1

And we laugh legitimately. There's a
mathematician, a different kind of
mathematician and a statistician.

BACK TO HOMER

Writhing on the floor, fumbling with the remote.

HOMER

Make it stop!

Bart enters.

BART

Oh no, not another space launch!
Change the channel! Change the channel!

HOMER

I can't! I can't!

Bart runs and pulls the plug out of the wall.

HOMER/BART

(RELIEVED SIGHS)

CUT TO:

INT. MISSION CONTROL - NEXT DAY

SCENE 4

We open on the big map which is tracking the spacecraft. A
senior scientist, DR. BABCOCK, comes up to a NASA
executive, JACK STILLWATER.

DR. BABCOCK

Sir, we've run into a serious problem
with the mission. These Nielsen
ratings are the lowest ever.

Babcock hands Stillwater the ratings.

STILLWATER

Oh my God! We've been beaten by an
infomercial for aquarium gravel.

INT. NASA - CONFERENCE ROOM

Stillwater is addressing a conference table full of NASA
SCIENTISTS and PERSONNEL.

STILLWATER

People, we're in danger of losing our
funding. America isn't interested in
space exploration anymore.

DR. BABCOCK

Maybe we should finally tell them the
big secret, that all the chimps we sent
into space came back super intelligent.

A chair swivels around, revealing a CHIMP in a suit,
wearing glasses and smoking a pipe.

CHIMP

(ARROGANT; ENGLISH ACCENT) No, I don't
think we'll be telling them that.

He does a toothy chimp smile, jumps off the chair, and
ROLLERSKATES away.

STILLWATER

We need a fresh angle to get the public
interested.

Dr. Babcock takes the floor.

DR. BABCOCK

The public see our astronauts as clean-cut, athletic go-getters. They hate people like that.

FEMALE SCIENTIST

Well who do they like?

DR. BABCOCK

Well, here are the most popular personalities on television or (AIR QUOTES) TV.

He **FLICKS** on a TV with a remote.

A) We see a TIM ALLEN-TYPE wearing a tool belt, sitting on top of a **SUPER-CHARGED** riding mower.

TIM ALLEN TYPE

(TRADEMARK MACHO SHOUT)

He floors the mower and shoots backward through a fence. We hear a **SCREAM**.

TIM ALLEN TYPE (CONT'D)

I've killed Wilson. (TRADEMARK MACHO SOUND)

Dr. Babcock **FLICKS** the remote.

B) The **ROSEANNE THEME MUSIC** plays as the CAMERA CIRCLE DOLLIES around obese parents shoveling huge amounts of food into their mouths and **LAUGHING**, while the children sit in front of empty plates and watch in fear and horror. Roseanne notices the camera, eyes it hungrily, and apparently swallows it.

C) The scene changes to the "Married With Children" living room. AL and PEG are on the sofa. Peg sits next to Al who has his hand in his pants and is drinking beer.

PEG

Al, let's have sex.

AL

Uh, no Peg.

SFX: HYSTERICAL CANNED LAUGHTER

After a long pause Al reaches over to a toilet which we reveal is next to the couch and **FLUSHES** it. There is loud audience **APPLAUSE** and **WHOOPING**.

BACK TO SCENE

SCENE 5

NERDY SCIENTIST

Why, they're all a bunch of blue collar slobs.

STILLWATER

People, that's who we need for our next astronaut.

DR. BABCOCK

I suggest a lengthy, inefficient search, at the tax payers expense, of course.

STILLWATER

I wish there was an easier way.

The phone **RINGS**. Stillwater answers.

HOMER (V.O.)

Hello, is this NASA?

STILLWATER

Yes.

Homer is on a payphone at Moe's (WE INTERCUT).

HOMER

Good. (ANGRILY) Listen, maybe I'm
just an ordinary blue collar slob, but
I know what I like on TV...

STILLWATER

How did you get this number?

HOMER

Shut up. I'm sick of your boring space
launches and... hold on a second.

SFX: TOILET FLUSH

The NASA scientists look at each other excitedly.

STILLWATER

People, our long search is over.

EXT. MOE'S BAR - NIGHT

A government car with a NASA logo pulls up in front.

INT. MOE'S BAR

Homer is on a pay phone.

HOMER

Hello, is this President Clinton?
Good. I bought a water softener at
Sears that's leaking and they won't
take it back. Now this is where you
come in. I want you... shut up!

A hand taps his shoulder.

DR. BABCOCK (V.O.)

Excuse me?

Homer SCREAMS and hangs up the phone. WIDEN to see
Stillwater and Dr. Babcock.

DR. BABCOCK (CONT'D)

Are you the person that called NASA
yesterday.

HOMER

(GASP) No. It wasn't me, I swear. It
was... him.

Homer points at BARNEY. They walk over to Barney who's
chug-a-lugging beer.

STILLWATER

Sir, how would you like to get higher
than you've ever been in your life?

BARNEY

Be an astronaut? Sure.

STILLWATER

Well, welcome aboard. I think you'll
find that this will win you the respect
of your peers.

HOMER

Nooo! It was me! I made the crank
call. I do it all the time. Check
with the FBI, I have a file. I HAVE A
FIIIIILE.

STILLWATER

(SHRUGGING) Better take both of them.

Dr. Babcock pulls out a blackjack and coldcocks Homer and
Barney.

STILLWATER (CONT'D)

I don't really think that was
necessary. They wanted to be
astronauts.

DR. BABCOCK

I know.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

SCENE 6

INT. HOTEL BANQUET ROOM - DAY

Members of the PRESS have gathered. Stillwater is on the stage behind a podium.

STILLWATER

Ladies and gentlemen and members of the press, I'd like to present the new generation of NASA astronaut, the average American.

A curtain rises revealing Homer and Barney. Homer wears a brand new barbecue apron that says: "HAIL TO THE CHEF," and is holding a spatula. Barney wears loud golfing pants and a tam. He is leaning on a club.

JIM WALLACE

Jim Wallace, Associated Press. (CLEARS THROAT) Is this a joke?

STILLWATER

Far from it, Jim. One of these men will prove space travel is within the reach of the common man.

TOBY HUNTER

Toby Hunter, Minneapolis Star. No, really, is this a joke?

STILLWATER

(ANNOYED) No Toby. And no more questions about whether this is a joke.

We see many reporters' hands go down while WHISPERING to one another.

REPORTER #1

Uh, yes...question for the barbecue chef: don't you think there is an inherent danger in sending under-qualified civilians into space?

HOMER

I'll field this one. Only if they send us to that terrible Planet of the Apes.

(THINKS) ...Wait a minute, Statue of Liberty... That was our planet.

(WAILING) You maniacs! You blew it up! Damn you! Damn you all to hell.

Homer starts pounding his hands on the floor and SOBBING.

REPORTER #2

Excuse me, is the golfer okay?

We see Barney lies passed out on the stage in a puddle of beer.

STILLWATER

Thank you, I'm afraid that's all we have time for.

The curtain **SQUEAKILY** lowers.

INT. SIMPSONS' KITCHEN - EVENING

The family eats dinner.

BART

Wow! My father, an astronaut! I feel so full of... what's the opposite of shame?

MARGE

Pride?

BART

No, not that far from shame.

HOMER

(HOPEFUL) Less shame?

BART

(AFFECTIONATELY) Yeah.

MARGE

You know, Homer, when I found out about this I went through a wide range of emotions. First I was nervous, then anxious, then wary, then apprehensive, then kinda sleepy, then worried, and then concerned. But now I realize that being a spaceman is something you have to do.

HOMER

(NOT LISTENING) Who's doin' what now?

EXT. CAPE CANAVERAL BASE - DAY

The Simpsons drive past a SENTRY at an entrance gate. Their car resembles the "Beverly Hillbillies" jalopy. Marge is in a rocking chair. A sign reads: "CAPE CANAVERAL, FORMERLY CAPE KENNEDY, FORMERLY CAPE ARBUCKLE."

EXT. NASA - DAY

SCENE 7

Dr. Babcock is showing Homer and Barney around the base. He escorts them toward a hangar.

STILLWATER

Now of course only one of you will be chosen to go into space, so the next few weeks will be a grueling series of tests to determine which one of you is most qualified.

DR. BABCOCK

Oh, and Barney - for the duration of the training, there'll be no more beer.

He plucks a can of beer out of Barney's hand.

BARNEY

What? Three whole weeks with only wine?
I'll go crazy?

HOMER

And may the best man win. (TO BABCOCK)
What he said about the wine, that's good for me, right?

INT. SIMPSONS' BASE QUARTERS - NIGHT

We start close on a foot KICKING a wall. PULL BACK to reveal Homer LAUGHING.

HOMER

(LAUGHING) Yes! Yes!

MARGE

What are you doing?

HOMER

(HAPPILY) It's not our house;

(LAUGHING) We can do whatever we want.

Here, help me deface this painting.

MARGE

No! I really think you should watch your behavior if you want to win this competition.

HOMER

Oh Marge, we're talking about Barney here. There is no competition.

Homer picks up an ornate lamp and **SMASHES** it against the wall.

MARGE

Homer, I brought that from home.

INT. NASA TRAINING FACILITY

Homer, in a training jumpsuit, is eating a donut. He comes up to Dr. Babcock.

HOMER

Well here I am, right on time. I don't see Barney, that means he's late. Write that down.

DR. BABCOCK

Actually he's been here since sunrise.

He points. We see Barney working out on a speed bag. He is very coordinated.

BARNEY

Hi Homer, since they made me stop drinking, I've regained my balance and diction. Observe.

Barney begins backflipping, a la Tom Cruise in "The Firm."

BARNEY (CONT'D)

(AS HE FLIPS) I am the very model of a modern Major General / I've information vegetable, animal, and mineral.

HOMER

(TO DR. BABCOCK, DESPERATELY) That's nothing. Watch this. (AS HE BEGINS RUNNING) There once was a man from Nantucket / Who...

He begins to cartwheel, and instantly **SMASHES** into a wall.

TRAINING MONTAGE

SCENE 8

STIRRING RIGHT STUFF TYPE MUSIC

- 1) Barney on the centrifuge, his face becomes highly distorted as G forces increase.
- 2) Homer on the centrifuge as G forces increase, his face becomes incredibly good-looking.
- 3) INT. WEIGHTLESS ROOM - A still slim Barney floats happily.

BARNEY

Hey, this is fun.

WIDEN to show Homer flopping around on the floor. Dr. Babcock turns a dial marked "WEIGHTLESSNESS" to maximum. Homer slowly rises a few inches from the floor and flashes Dr. Babcock the "thumbs up" sign.

DR. BABCOCK

I don't understand it. We've never had to use so much weightlessness before.

- 4) Homer and Barney, in space suits, are held from behind as NASA ENGINEERS pummel them in the stomach.

HOMER

(IN PAIN) Hey, what's this for?

DR. BABCOCK

(LYING) Science.

5) In an arena, Babcock and other SCIENTISTS sit in bleachers watching Homer and Barney fighting each other with gladiator-type weapons. They wear glowing slave collars around their necks. "STAR TREK FIGHT MUSIC" rages.

Babcock leans over to another scientist.

DR. BABCOCK

I wager 400 quatloos on the newcomer.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Homer and Barney are changing. Barney looks great. Homer is an exhausted wreck. Stillwater comes up to Barney with two clean-cut astronauts.

STILLWATER

Gentlemen, I'd like you to meet the two experienced astronauts who will accompany the winner into space. Race Banyon and Buzz Aldrin, the second man on the moon.

BUZZ

(PROUDLY) First one to take a soil sample.

An awkward pause as they all look at him.

BUZZ (CONT'D)

So Barney, we hear you're kickin' ass.

HOMER

Ahem... I don't think this competition is over yet, Buzz. If that is your real name. For instance, my jaw's much stronger than Barney's. Here, hold this.

Homer hands Buzz one end of a towel. He puts the other in his mouth.

HOMER (CONT'D)

(THROUGH CLENCHED TEETH) Now, pull!

Pull!

Homer begins **GROWLING** and pulling like a dog. Buzz puts up with it for a few moments, then takes his end and puts it in the mouth of a passing dog. Homer and the dog continue struggling and **GROWLING**. The astronauts, Stillwater and Barney quietly walk off.

INT. BASE HOUSING - KITCHEN - DAY

SCENE 9

Marge sits around with some ASTRONAUT WIVES. They have beehive hairdos too. There is one ASTRONAUT HUSBAND.

ASTRO WIFE #1

Marge, this icebox cake is scrumptious.
I want to give you my recipe for
Mayonnaise Pie.

MARGE

Great. I love mayonnaise.

ASTRO HUSBAND

So does my Sally. I practically wear
out my little apron cooking for her
after a mission.

ASTRO WIFE #2

We all have a lot in common.

ASTRO WIFE #3

Yeah, we're all married to genuine
American heroes.

At that moment, Homer appears at the window, still fighting
the dog over the towel. Marge pulls down the shade.

MARGE

Sun's a little bright, isn't it?

EXT. NASA GYM - NEXT DAY

Stillwater enters with Dr. Babcock and addresses Homer and
Barney.

STILLWATER

Gentlemen, you've both worked very
hard, and in a way you're both winners.
But in another more accurate way,
Barney is the winner.

HOMER

(HEARTFELT) Congratulations, Barney.

STILLWATER

That's very gracious of you, Homer.
Please join us in a toast.

He pulls out a bottle of champagne.

STILLWATER / DR. BABCOCK

To the mission.

Barney takes one sip. He gets a crazed look in his eye.

BARNEY

(OMINOUSLY) It begins.

He grabs the bottle and starts to chug-a-lug.

STILLWATER / BABCOCK

(AD LIBBING) No! / Please! / For God
sake!

Stillwater and Babcock try to wrestle the bottle away from Barney who easily sweeps them aside. He straps on a nearby jet pack and **FLIES** off.

BARNEY

(BAD CHARGE) Ta da da dum da da!

DR. BABCOCK

I don't understand it. That was non-
alcoholic champagne.

STILLWATER

(SIGHS) Well, Homer. I guess you're
the winner by default.

HOMER

(JUBILANT) Default! Woo hoo! The two
sweetest words in the English language.

(CHANTING AND DANCING) De-fault! De-
fault! De-

Dr. Babcock **KNOCKS** him cold with the blackjack.

STILLWATER

(RE: BLACKJACK) Where'd you get that
thing, anyway?

DR. BABCOCK

Sent away.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

SCENE 10

ON TV

We see an art card that reads "ITCHY AND SCRATCHY - SCAR
TREK: THE NEXT LACERATION."

EXT. SPACE - AFTERNOON

We see a small spaceship ZOOM by.

INT. SPACESHIP - CONTINUOUS

SCRATCHY takes a last bite of a sandwich. He suddenly
grimaces in pain and clutches his convulsing stomach.
ITCHY pops out of his stomach a la Alien, holding the last
bite of the sandwich. Scratchy SCREAMS.

Itchy throws Scratchy into the airlock and prepares to blow
him into space. Scratchy zips up his spacesuit and dons a
helmet just as he is SUCKED OUT into space.

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

The spaceship's robotic claws grab Scratchy and turn him
directly toward Saturn, whose rings are spinning like a
buzz saw. SFX: BUZZ SAW. They saw Scratchy neatly in
half. He watches his pelvis and legs float away. He
"swims" desperately after them, but they burn up in the
atmosphere. Scratchy shrugs. One of the robotic claws
rips off Scratchy's helmet. His head and eyeballs begin to
puff up a la Total Recall. Scratchy's eyes dart back and
forth, watching his head swell.

The other robotic claw takes a shiny hat pin and POPS his
ballooning head, splattering on the pod's windshield
spelling "THE END."

An art card reads "VIEWER ADVISORY."

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The preceding program contained scenes
of extreme violence and should not have
been viewed by young children.

BACK TO SCENE

Bart and Lisa are LAUGHING.

BART

(LAUGHING) That was great.

We WIDEN TO SEE that Homer is drenched in sweat.

HOMER

(UNEASY LAUGH) It's funny 'cuz it's
not true... right?... right?... RIGHT?

BART/LISA

(AD-LIBBING) Sure Dad/ Yeah...etc...

EXT. NASA - DAY

We see the real spacecraft on the launch pad.

INT. NASA CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Triumphant MUSIC plays as Homer and the two astronauts in full space suits walk toward us in heroic slow motion. They get closer and closer until finally just Homer's face fills the screen. He looks up at the impossibly tall spacecraft. MUSIC - an ominous version of "Itchy And Scratchy" sting.

HOMER

(LOW SLO-MO VOICE) Nooooo!

Homer suddenly pops out of slow motion and runs quickly away. He jumps over a fence in the distance.

EXT. EVERGLADES

Homer runs through the underbrush. NASA men with flashlights fan out through the woods, looking for him. We do not see their leader's face, only that he has dangling keys hanging from his belt.

HOMER

(TERRIFIED OUT OF BREATH) Got to call

Marge. Got to phone home. Phone home.

EXT. GAS STATION

Homer is talking on a pay phone.

INTERCUT BETWEEN HOMER AT THE PAYPHONE AND MARGE.

HOMER

Marge, I don't really want to go through with this... But being an astronaut is how I got you to respect me.

MARGE

(SINCERE) Homer, when I met you, you weren't an astronaut. You didn't even know how to use a Touchtone. But I still respected you, and I always will, no matter what.

SFX: TOUCHTONE PHONE KEYS

MARGE (CONT'D)

(MILDLY ANNOYED) Homer, you already dialed.

HOMER

Oh. (WHINY)

MARGE

But on the other hand, when you don't take advantage of an opportunity, you can end up regretting it for the rest of your life.

HOMER

Yeah, like the opportunity I missed the day after our wedding. I met this girl. She was really hot and I thought if only I hadn't gotten married... Why?! Why?!

MARGE

(VERY ANNOYED MURMUR) Are you aware you're talking out loud?

HOMER

(REALIZING) I...oh... Gotta go, we're blasting off. Four, three, two, one, BYYYYYYEE! (PULLING PHONE FROM MOUTH)
Oh, the Earth looks so small.

He hangs up the phone.

EXT. CAPE CANAVERAL - DAY

SCENE 11

We see the rocket sitting on the launch pad.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

T-minus three minutes till lift off and counting.

INT. SPACE CRAFT - CONTINUOUS

Buzz Aldrin and Race Banyon are going over a checklist.

BUZZ

Mission control, this is Corvair,
launch sequence initiated. All systems go.

HOMER

Are we there yet? I'm thirsty.

BUZZ

Permission to sedate cargo ahead of
schedule.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Permission denied.

RACE

Payload checklist. IRS surveillance
satellite.

BUZZ

Check!

RACE

Ant farm.

BUZZ

Check!

RACE

Children's letters to God.

BUZZ

Check!

HOMER

You know the best thing about these
space suits is you can go to the
bathroom anytime anywhere.

A smile slowly crosses Homer's face and he begins to
CHUCKLE.

BUZZ

Homer, you're not wearing one of those suits.

His smile slowly fades.

EXT. LAUNCHPAD - DAY

We see the rocket on the launchpad.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Three, two, one, make rocket go now.

The rocket begins to lift off.

INT. SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

We see Buzz and Race, their mouths slowly forced open by the G-forces.

RACE

Can't close mouth... jaws too weak.

PAN OVER to Homer who points to his clenched teeth tauntingly.

HOMER

Heh, heh, heh. Hey Race, check it out.

The G-forces cause Homer's hand to **SMACK** into his face.

INT. SIMPSONS' BASE HOUSE LIVING ROOM

We see Marge, the kids, Patty, Selma, and Grampa watching the rocket lift-off.

BART

Go, Dad! Go!

LISA

How doth the hero, strong and brave, a
celestial path in the heavens pave!

Everyone looks at her for a beat.

LISA (CONT'D)

(THEN, MEEKLY) Go, Dad, go.

INT. MOE'S

Barney and the barflies are watching the rocket lift off on TV. Barney lifts up his glass in a toast.

BARNEY

This one's for you, Homer.

MOE & BARFLIES

(AD-LIBBING) Yeah!/ Here here!/ To
Homer! etc...

BARNEY

(LOOKING AROUND) Hey, where is Homer
anyway?

ON TV

SCENE 12

The rocket climbs higher into the sky.

BROCKMAN (V.O.)

... And congratulations to
Springfield's own Homer Simpson, the
nation's first average man in space.

A picture of Homer appears with the name "HOMER SIMPSON"
flashing below it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A GUY watches TV.

GUY

Finally, they send up an ordinary guy
like me.

With intense, telekinetic glances around the room, he
closes all the shutters and windows a la Carrie. He then
stares at some logs in his fireplace which BURST into
flame.

INT. NASA MISSION CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Babcock walks over to Stillwater.

DR. BABCOCK

Sir, the TV ratings for the launch are
the highest in ten years.

EVERYBODY

(CHEERS)

STILLWATER

And how's the spacecraft doing?

DR. BABCOCK

I don't know. All this equipment is
just used to measure TV ratings.

EXT. SPACE

We see the spacecraft rising above the silver blue jewel
that is the Earth.

HOMER (V.O.)

It's beautiful. It's the most awe
inspiring sight I have ever seen.

CUT TO:

INT. SPACESHIP - CONTINUOUS

We see that Homer is not addressing the Earth, but a bag of
chips.

HOMER

... giver of life, mother of us all.

He holds up a big bag of potato chips.

HOMER (CONT'D)

(TO BUZZ AND RACE) Hey guys, look what
I smuggled aboard.

BUZZ

Homer, no!

Homer rips open the bag. Chips explode all over the cabin and float everywhere.

RACE

They'll clog the instruments!

BUZZ

(DODGING CHIPS) Careful, they're ruffled!

HOMER

I'll take care of this.

Homer pushes off from a wall and floats through the air CHOMPING potato chips. The BLUE DANUBE begins to PLAY. Homer approaches a floating chip and begins to rotate with it in perfect sync a la 2001. He eats it and moves onto another one. Homer continues to float along gracefully, but then looks forward.

HOMER POV

He is headed directly for a large glass panel marked "EXPERIMENTAL ANT COLONY."

HOMER

(SCREAM) Ants!

As he yells, he sprays chips. He tries futilely to back pedal. In unison, all of the ants look over toward Homer.

ANTS POV

Homer's face growing grotesquely huge.

ANTS

(UPSET SQUEAKING)

ANT #1

SUBTITLE: PROTECT THE QUEEN!

ANT #2

SUBTITLE: WHICH ONE'S THE QUEEN?

ANT #3

SUBTITLE: I'M THE QUEEN.

ANT #4

SUBTITLE: NO YOU'RE NOT.

Just as the **MUSIC** crescendos, Homer **CRASHES** into the ant farm. The spacecraft is now filled with potato chips, sand, and ants.

ANTS

(UPSET SQUEAKING)

SUBTITLE: FREEDOM! HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE FREEDOM!

BUZZ

(ANGRY) You fool, now we may never know if ants can be trained to sort tiny screws in space.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Some good news, gentlemen, we have quite a treat for you. We've been able to coax superstar James Taylor in here at mission control to wish you well and play a little of his own brand of laid back adult contemporary music.

HOMER

Wow! Former president James Taylor. This is a treat.

JAMES TAYLOR (V.O.)

How ya doin', fellas?

BUZZ

With all due respect, Mr. Taylor, this isn't the best time for your unique brand of bittersweet folk rock. We have a potentially critical situation here. I'm sure you understand. Could you give us a half hour?

JAMES TAYLOR

Listen, Aldrin, I'm not as laid back as people think. Now here's the deal: I'm gonna play and you're gonna float there and like it.

James Taylor begins **PLAYING** "You Got a Friend."

JAMES TAYLOR (CONT'D)

(SINGING) When you're down and troubled
and you need a helping hand... (etc)

INT. SPACESHIP - CONTINUOUS

We see Homer and the astronauts floating in a mess of chips and ants, listening to the **MUSIC** coming out of a small speaker.

INT. SIMPSONS' BASE HOUSING LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS SC 14

The family watches TV.

ON TV

We see Kent Brockman.

KENT BROCKMAN

We're just about to get our first pictures from inside the spacecraft with "Average-naut" Homer Simpson. And we'd like to...

A TV shot from inside the spacecraft appears. Homer and the astronauts float in the midst of ants and chips, while James Taylor **PLAYS** in the background. An ant floats directly in front of the lens, making it look gigantic. Kent Brockman and the Simpsons **SCREAM**. The picture from space is suddenly cut off.

KENT BROCKMAN (CONT'D)

(CALMLY) Ladies and gentlemen, we've just lost the picture, but what we've seen speaks for itself. The Corvair spacecraft has apparently been taken over, conquered, if you will, by a master race of giant space ants. It is difficult to tell from this vantage point whether they will consume the captive Earthmen or merely enslave them. One thing is for certain, there is no stopping them; the ants will soon be here. And I, for one, welcome our new insect overlords. I'd like to remind them that as a trusted TV personality, I can be helpful in rounding up others to toil in their underground sugar caves.

A mortise appears with a giant ant wearing pants and wielding a whip over cowering humans slaves.

BACK TO SCENE

MARGE

Don't worry, kids, I'm sure your
father's all right.

LISA

What are you basing that on, Mom?

MARGE

(BEAT, COVERING) Who wants ginger
snaps?

INT. SPACECRAFT - A LITTLE LATER

James Taylor is singing "Fire and Rain."

JAMES TAYLOR

Hours of time on the telephone line /
to talk about things to come. / Sweet
dreams, and flying machines, in pieces
on the ground... (REALIZES; STOPS
SINGING) Oops, sorry. (SINGING)
Flying machines flying safely through
the air.

RACE

Oh my god! The ants are shorting out
our navigation system!

We see a panel smoking and SPARKING. The ship lurches from
side to side, throwing the astronauts with it a la "Lost in
Space." For some reason, Homer is flung in the opposite
direction from the others.

INT - MISSION CONTROL

Dr. Babcock and Stillwater are watching the astronauts on a monitor.

DR. BABCOCK

How ironic, nature's smallest creature endangers the lives of nature's largest creature.

STILLWATER

Are you sure you're a scientist?

JAMES TAYLOR

Ants, huh? We had quite a severe ant problem at the Vineyard this year. I had Art Garfunkel come by with his compressor and we created a total vacuum outside the house and blew the ants out the front door. But I'm sure you high-tech NASA people could care less about our resort town ways.

DR. BABCOCK

Quiet, you.

STILLWATER

Wait a minute, this unkempt youngster just may be on to something.

INT. SPACECRAFT - LATER

SCENE 15

Homer, Buzz and Race have donned spacesuits.

BUZZ

All right, here we go: three, two, one, make hatch blow...now!

The hatch flies open. All the ants and other debris are immediately sucked out. Homer is hanging on to the control panel.

HOMER

And that is that.

He dusts his hands and immediately starts to get sucked out of the ship.

HOMER (CONT'D)

No!

Just as he is sucked out of the hatch, he grabs the door handle which starts to bend.

INT. NASA MISSION CONTROL

Stillwater and Babcock are watching on the monitor.

STILLWATER

Oh my god! This is a disaster.

Stillwater and Babcock turn and glare at James Taylor.

JAMES TAYLOR

Gotta go!

He drops his guitar with a **FLANG** and sprints out.

INT. SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

Homer is holding onto the door handle which is beginning to bend. The Astronauts grab him just as the handle **SNAPS** off.

BUZZ

Homer, you broke the handle. With that hatch open, we'll burn up on reentry.

RACE

If I go, I'm taking you to hell with me.

Race advances on Homer menacingly.

Homer backs away from them, groping desperately for a weapon and pulls a pipe from the wall.

HOMER

(DESPERATELY) Wait a minute Race! Wait
a minute. Wait!...Ah-ha!

He brandishes the bar, raising it over his head for a crashing blow. It gets lodged in the broken door handle socket. Tugging on the bar to try to free it, he pulls the door shut.

HOMER (CONT'D)

(STRUGGLING) Stupid bar.

BUZZ

Wait, Homer. If that bar holds, we
might just make it back to earth.

HOMER

I'll bash you good.

Homer continues trying to pull the bar free. The astronauts must **WRESTLE** him away from the door.

CUT TO:

ON TV

SCENE 16

KENT BROCKMAN

Well, this reporter was possibly a
little hasty earlier and would like to
reaffirm his allegiance to this country
and its human president. It may not be
perfect, but it's still the best
government we have. (BEAT--EYES
DARTING) For now. (TO OFF CAMERA) Hmm?
Oh, yes...

We WIDEN to see a hastily made cardboard sign that reads "HAIL ANTS." He tears it down.

KENT BROCKMAN (CONT'D)

(OFF-HANDEDLY SKIMMING NOTES) By the way, the spacecraft is still in extreme danger. ...May not make it back. Attempting risky reentry... Blah blah blah blah blah. We'll see you after the movie.

EXT. SPACE

The spacecraft is hurtling into the upper ionosphere and is SPARKING and glowing bright red.

INT. SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

We see the hatch and bar vibrating wildly. We PAN over to see Buzz and Race bravely HUMMING "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." We PAN from them over to Homer.

HOMER

(SINGING) Oh, those Golden Grahams/ Oh, those Golden Grahams/ Crispy Crunchy Graham cereal brand new breakfast treat.

CUT TO:

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

The Simpsons are watching a NASA simulation of the spacecraft's reentry.

LISA

Come on, Dad, you can make it.

GRAMPA

Of course he'll make it. It's TV.

INT. SPACECRAFT - LATER

They are on the ground. Buzz opens the hatch. They are immediately besieged by reporters.

REPORTERS

(AD-LIBBING) Are you okay? How did you do it? Did you see me waving to you up there? Is Madonna pregnant?

REPORTER

How did you solve the door problem?

BUZZ

(GENEROUSLY) Homer Simpson was the real hero here. He jury-rigged the door closed using this.

REPORTER

Hey, what is that?

RERPORTER #4

It's an inanimate carbon rod.

Homer holds up the rod for all to see. Flashbulbs pop. We ZOOM IN on just the hand holding the rod.

MATCH DISSOLVE
TO:

The cover of TIME MAGAZINE. Only the rod, not Homer, has made the cover of the magazine. The headline reads: "In Rod We Trust."

ON TV

We see the rod is being given a huge ticker-tape parade. PULL BACK to see Homer watching the parade. He FLICKS off the TV, disgusted.

BART

(DISAPPOINTED) Aww, they were just about to show some closeups of the rod.

HOMER

(DEPRESSED) Stupid rod. I got gypped.

MARGE

Homie, you should be proud. Only a handful of people have done what you've done.

LISA

Yeah, Dad. How many people have seen the ice caps and the deserts all at once, or the majesty of the northern lights from one hundred miles above?

HOMER

Yeah, maybe I do have the right...

(SEARCHING FOR THE WORD) what's that stuff? (BEAT) Anyway, thanks, Marge, Lisa.

MARGE

Bart, do you have something nice to say to your father?

BART

Eh, he knows how I feel.

Bart caps a magic marker with a **SNAP**. We see the back of Homer's head. Bart has written the word "HERO."

WE PAN UP from Homer through the roof of the house, high into space where we see the Fox Satellite orbiting the earth. A sign reads: "DANGER - RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS."

We get closer and see the satellite is covered with ants *
who are eating it. Each time they bite, an electric bolt
SHOOTS through them making them grow larger and larger.
Soon the picture flickers. We see a few frames of each of
CSPAN, QVC, CNN, VH1, etc. Finally, color bars appear
for a moment, then black.

END OF ACT THREE